Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 38 with the following amended paragraph:

VEGF receptor selective mutants FLT-sel (R82E/K84E/H86E, deficient in KDR binding) and KDR-sel (D63A/E64A/E67A, deficient in FLT-1 binding) were prepared using the ~~Muta-Gene~~ MUTA-GENE® Phagemid *in vitro* mutagenesis kit as described previously (Keyt et al., 1996, J. Bio. Chem., 271:4538-5646). The heterodimeric form of recombinant human hepatocyte growth factor (HGF) was produced in and isolated from Chinese hamster ovary cells as previously described (Shen et al., 1997, *Am. J. Physiol., 272:L1115-L1120).*

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 32 with the following amended paragraph:

The methods for cell lysis and Western blot (WB) have been described in Shen et al., 1998 *J. Biol. Chem.* 273:29979-29985. A monoclonal anti-eNOS antibody was used at 1:2500 to probe eNOS protein. A secondary antibody conjugated with horseradish peroxidase (1:2500) (Zymed) and an enhanced chemiluminescent kit (Amershal Pharmacia Biotech) were used to visualize the eNOS immunoreactive bands. Multiple exposures of films were obtained to determine the optical exposure time. The protein bands were scanned by a densitometer and the relative intensities were quantified using ~~ImageQuant~~ IMAGEQUANT® software (Molecular Dynamics).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 39, with the following amended paragraph:

In addition, eNOS activity in cell lysates from cells incubated with or without VEGF for 0-60 min or 2 days was measured using a ~~NOS detection~~ NOS DETECTION® kit. Figure 1C shows that eNOS activity in VEGF-treated cells was about 5 fold greater than that in untreated control cells, which was proportional to the increased eNOS protein levels (5.5 fold). Figure 1D shows that acute VEGF treatment (0-60 min) resulted in a time-dependent increase in eNOS activity.